



**Meeting Minutes**

***Stewardship Councilors in Attendance:*** Chairman Whitney Hatch, Toni Pollak, Elisa Campbell, Heather Clish, Walter Bickford, Michele Hanss, Dennis Smith

***DCR Staff in Attendance:*** Priscilla Geigis, Joe Rotondo, Stephen Doody, Peter Church, Mark Steffen, Susan Kane, Andy Backman, Georgia Polemenakos

***Public Attendees:*** None

***Attachments:*** RMPs Currently Underway, Forestry Update and Overview PowerPoint

**Chairman Hatch called the meeting to order at 12:07 p.m.**

- Chairman Hatch welcomed the Council, and reviewed the agenda
- Thanked Peter Church for attending

**Commissioner's Report –Fill in Priscilla Geigis**

*Priscilla Geigis informed the Council on/of the following matters:*

- Welcome and introduction
- Talked about the incredible and passionate team at DCR
- Commissioner Roy (LPR) went to many locations around MA for National Preservation Month
  - Joined Beaton and Rosenberg for the Hitchcock Center tour
  - LPR went to New Bedford for pier refrigeration
  - LPR was at the Envirothon supporting students learning about invasive species
- Upcoming events
  - Adaptive Recreational Fair
  - Capital Campout
  - Park & Pedal program with new locations
  - Planting 150 trees by Ropes & Gray at Emerald Necklace
  - Dedication of Braille Trail

**Committee Updates**

***Policy and Planning Committee, Chairwoman Elisa Campbell***

*Chairwoman Campbell informed the Council on/of the following matters:*

- LPR meeting soon with staff to discuss trail issues at October mountain
  - Blue Hills, difficulty nailing down where boundaries are
    - Paul Cavanagh – DCR planning staff, working out with GHS staff
- Boston Harbor Islands draft RFP - cottages and sea level rise, how to plan ahead.
- Whitney Hatch : asked if the cottages are under same regime as Myles Standish cottages
  - Priscilla replied that they are.

### ***Finance Committee, Councilor Heather Clish***

*Councilor Clish informed the Council on/of the following matters:*

- Increase of \$2.25M earmarks for DCR thru Senate. Good opportunity for Stewardship
- \$1.472M in unfunded earmarks (House at \$3M in all funded amendments).
- Sen. Wolf attempted to increase Parks to \$47M, earmarked \$200K for baseline budget review.
- Hatch: That means how much work can be done for "free" before getting money. As I've said before, very hard to determine the agency's exact budget needs, which go up and down over time.
  - A vote to provide Heather with editorial privileges to write a letter endorsing funding was taken and passed by all

### ***Forestry Update, Peter Church***

*Director Church informed the Council on/of the following matters:*

- Church gave an overview, and then talked about 8 projects that went to the public and concerns from stakeholders.
- Management forestry program - manage, monitor and maintain.
  - "Eyes and ears" of state forest.
  - We have 8 forestry districts, 1900 CFI plots across state to tell how healthy forest is, what's growing, and about our invasive species. Boundary marking. Media attention focused on 2011 Springfield tornado anniversary.
- Forest future visioning and landscape designations.
- Adoption of an ecosystem services model, using lands for a variety of services.
  - Includes harvesting process, when we hold public meetings (low attendance).
  - Post comments on website, then receive/respond and site visit. Finally, prepare and file MA Cutting Plan.
- In public meeting, concern about carbon and carbon storage.
  - One overall critique from 21 stakeholders saying DCR has disregarded FFVP, and fallen back on "business as usual."
    - We said the goal down the road is a healthier forest that holds more carbon
    - Lack of project oversight/staffing levels
      - We're comfortable for now with oversight. We don't want to get ahead of ourselves, do too much. We just posted another forest management position as part of ERIP last year.
    - How have operations changed, examples from pre Landscape Designation time?
      - Church: Can't speak to predecessor that much, but former state forester had set goals of how much acreage each forester should be producing per year (400 acres of timber harvesting in your district). Goal drive as opposed to looking at forest and seeing what it needs. Not just about revenue generation, also about putting back into the resource. Outside of us being transparent...
      - Hatch: This is based on FFVP that put prescriptions in place which is very different
- Growth vs. Harvest
  - Cutting 12% of growth in western valley CT district
  - We could cut 100% of our growth and still be under limit. Aim is what we can manage as a program. A few years ago we realized we were doing too much, didn't have resources to oversee how much we're cutting.

- Church: In letter, "business as usual" is another concern. These 8 projects have keyed reasons for doing them
  - Campbell: - At a recent forest hearing, an expert said carbon sequestration is very complicated. Hard to know how much carbon is actually stored. This letter ignored this.
  - Pollak: How much DCR land used to be agriculture?
    - Church: A lot. Estimates say that forests are about 100-120 years old.
  - Smith: Lumber harvesting private contractors? Based on whole forest
    - Church: Yes. We put out specs, minimum threshold bid, based on just particular project area.
  - Hanss: Do we know how these trees will be taken down?
    - Church: Yes, we demand certain equipment for particular projects.
  - Hanss: Using native trees to replant?
    - Church: Mother Nature does job for us most of the time. Cut areas usually have good seed sources underneath.
- Hatch: any developments on forestry can be part of the commissioner's report from now on. Any other business? Approve last minutes?
  - All vote yes

### **Approval of Minutes**

- Motion by Councilor Dennis Smith, seconded by Councilor Toni Pollak to accept the May, 2016 minutes. All in favor, motion carried.

### **New Business**

- No New Business

### **Public Comment**

**The following constituents expressed their opinions/issues/matters to the Council:**

### **Closing Comment**

- No Closing Comments

### **Meeting Schedule**

Next meeting will be held Thursday, July 7 at Willowdale at Bradley Palmer State Park.

*Chairman Hatch adjourned the meeting at 1:56 p.m.*